

REMARKS

This is a response to the Office Action mailed May 10, 2006, in which claims 1-17 are pending. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of the above-captioned application.

It is noted with appreciation that the Examiner has acknowledged Applicant's claim to foreign priority as well as returned initialed copies of the Information Disclosure Statements filed February 10, and March 8, 2006, respectively. However, it is noted that the Examiner has not indicated acceptance of the drawings filed on September 30, 2003. Applicant respectfully requests an indication of acceptance of the drawings in response to this communication.

Applicant has amended the specification to correct a minor typographical error. New claims 18-23 have been added, which correspond to Applicant's Figures 13-22.

Claims 1, 3-5, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15 and 16 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Tabata*, U.S. Patent No. 6,111,658. Claims 2, 8, 11 and 14 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of *Tabata* as applied to claims 1, 7, 10 and 13 and further in view of *Tada*, U.S. Patent No. 4,866,534. Claims 6 and 17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Tabata* as applied to claims 5 and 16 above and further in view of *Sakatani et al.*, U.S. Patent No. 6,538,771.

In the rejection of claim 1, the Examiner asserts that the claimed feature of a second assignment portion selecting from said basic patterns longitudinally and laterally arranged a basic pattern remotest from any pixel assigned a number, and assigning a subsequent number to a pixel in said basic pattern selected, wherein

said second assignment portion repeats assignment to assign in said basic dither pattern a number indicating an order to be followed to illuminate a dot is disclosed in the Abstract, column 6, lines 53-56, column 7, lines 57-67 and column 9, lines 50-67 of the *Tabata* patent.

The Abstract of the *Tabata* patent does not disclose selecting from basic patterns longitudinally and laterally arranged a basic pattern remotest from any pixel assigned a number. Nor does the Abstract disclose assigning a pixel a number as recited in independent claim 1.

As for the cited disclosure at column 6, lines 53-56 of the *Tabata* patent, this refers to the threshold matrix illustrated in Figure 3 in which the numeral shown in individual elements of the threshold matrix indicate the order of priority in which the dots are set ON in accordance with the gradations in the original image input from the host. Column 6, lines 53-56 do not teach selecting from basic patterns longitudinally and laterally arranged a basic pattern remotest from any pixel assigned a number or assigning a subsequent number to a pixel in such a selected basic pattern.

As for the citation to column 7, lines 57-67 of the *Tabata* patent, this refers to the tone of color of each pixel in an image and not to where the basic pattern will be arranged either longitudinally or laterally or any of the other features recited in independent claim 1.

Finally, the citation at column 9, lines 50-67 refers to a second embodiment wherein a basic pattern matrix and an arrangement pattern matrix are used as threshold matrices. There is no teaching that the basic pattern matrix and arrangement pattern matrix are used by a second assignment portion selecting from

said basic patterns longitudinally and laterally arranged a basic pattern remotest from any pixel assigned a number, and assigning a subsequent number to a pixel in said basic pattern selected, wherein said second assignment portion repeats assignment to assign in said basic dither pattern a number indicating an order to be followed to illuminate a dot.

Furthermore, the second assignment portion feature also claims wherein said second assignment portion repeats assignment to assign in said basic dither pattern a number indicating an order to be followed to illuminate a dot.

The *Tabata* patent does not disclose or suggest a second assignment portion or step selecting from said basic patterns longitudinally and laterally arranged a basic pattern remotest from any pixel assigned a number, and assigning a subsequent number to a pixel in said basic pattern selected, wherein said second assignment portion repeats assignment to assign in said basic dither pattern a number indicating an order to be followed to illuminate a dot as recited in independent claims 1, 7, 10 and 13. Accordingly, the rejections of these claims should be withdrawn.

The Office Action states the *Tabata* patent does not disclose a first or second assignment section as recited in independent claim 1, but since Applicant's figure 25 and figures 3, 6A and 8 of the *Tabata* patent are allegedly similar that the claim details must be taught.

Firstly, that is a conclusory statement not motivation. Applicant's Figure 25 illustrates the steps S503-509 of Figure 23 (see Brief Description of the Drawings), while Figures 3 and 6A of the *Tabata* patent refer to a threshold matrix and a basic pattern matrix, respectively. Figure 8 of the *Tabata* patent discloses a threshold

matrix derived from the process outlined in Figure 7 of the *Tabata* patent (see column 11, lines 20-22, which refer to column 10, line 34—column 11, line 19). The disclosure in column 10, line 34-column 11, line 19 does not refer to selecting from said basic patterns longitudinally and laterally arranged a basic pattern remotest from any pixel assigned a number, and assigning a subsequent number to a pixel in said basic pattern selected, wherein said second assignment portion repeats assignment to assign in said basic dither pattern a number indicating an order to be followed to illuminate a dot as disclosed in independent claim 1. Therefore, the *Tabata* patent does not disclose any motivation for altering the processes taught in its disclosure to arrive at Applicant's claimed invention.

In the rejections of claims 2, 6, 8, 11, 14 and 17, neither the *Tada* patent nor the *Sakatani* patent, individually, or in combination with the *Tabata* patent, disclose the feature of a second assignment portion or step of selecting from said basic patterns longitudinally and laterally arranged a basic pattern remotest from any pixel assigned a number, and assigning a subsequent number to a pixel in said basic pattern selected, wherein said second assignment portion repeats assignment to assign in said basic dither pattern a number indicating an order to be followed to illuminate a dot as recited in independent claims 1, 7, 10, and 13. Accordingly, the rejection of these claims should be withdrawn.

As for new claims 18-23, none of the applied patents, *Tabata*, *Tada*, or *Sakatani*, individually or in combination, disclose or suggest all of the features recited in the claims. For instance, none of the applied prior art discloses or suggests in combination with the other features of the claim associating each shade of a second number of shades having density values lower than said first number of shades with


a shade of said first number of shades that corresponds to the shade of said second number of shades. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-23 are in condition for allowance and notification to that effect is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner has any questions or believes that a personal interview would expedite prosecution, he is invited to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: August 10, 2006

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